

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-11 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 USIA-15 TRSE-00 SAM-01 SAJ-01

ACDA-19 ISO-00 DRC-01 SS-20 NSC-10 DODE-00 NIC-01

IO-14 /148 W

----- 063811

R 151830Z FEB 74

FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4106

INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS 3713

USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 0852

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO

SUBJ: TEXT OF FRENCH NAC STATEMENT ON ALLIANCE CONSULTATION

REF: USNATO 0803

1. THE FOLLOWING TEXT IS AN INFORMAL, MISSION TRANSLATION OF FRENCH PERMREP DE ROSE'S FEB 13 STATEMENT IN THE COUNCIL SETTING FORTH FRANCE'S VIEWS ON ALLIANCE CONSULTATIONS. PREVIOUSLY REPORTED ON THE BASIS OF DE ROSE'S ORAL PRESENTATION IN THE NAC, HIS REMARKS WERE SUBSEQUENTLY CIRCULATED IN MEMORANDUM FORM BY THE FRENCH NATO DEL.

2. BEGIN TEXT

DURING THE COUNCIL'S MEETING ON 30 JANUARY, A DEBATE OPENED ON THE PROBLEM OF CONSULTATION BETWEEN MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE.

THE OCCASION FOR THIS WAS THE COMMUNICATION MR. RUMSFELD HAD JUST MADE CONCERNING THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S TRIP TO THE NEAR EAST WHICH WAS CONFIRMED BY THE AGREEMENT ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES IN THE SINAI. FOLLOWING THIS EXPOSE', AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS TOOK PLACE BE-
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TWEEN SEVERAL OF THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES, PARTICULARLY THE DOYEN AND THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR, ABOUT WHICH, I BELIEVE, MR. RUMSFELD SAID THAT IT SEEMED TO HIM THAT THE SUBSTANCE OF THE PROBLEM WAS AT LAST BEING APPROACHED.

THIS DEBATE IS DOUBTLESS AS OLD AS THE ALLIANCE. IT BEARS UPON THE QUESTION OF KNOWING HOW CONSULTATION OR INFORMATION, AS THE CASE MAY BE, CAN BECOME THE PERMANENT POLITICAL AUXILIARIES OF THE COMMITMENTS WHICH ARE THE VERY PURPOSE OF THE TREATY, I.E., THOSE RELATING TO OUR COMMON SECURITY.

IN THE PAST, AT LEAST TWO REPORTS HAD ADDRESSED THE MATTER: THAT OF THE THREE WISE MEN IN 1956 AND THE HARMEL REPORT IN 1967. I WILL NOT CONTEXT THEIR AUTHORITY SINCE BOTH WERE APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY. BUT WE ARE COMPELLED TO OBSERVE THAT THE FIRST ONE, THE MOST AMBITIOUS, WAS NOT CONSECRATED BY BEING PUT INTO PRACTICE. THIS DOUBTLESS EXPLAINS THE RESTRAINED AND REALISTIC FORMULAE OF THE SECOND.

RECENTLY, THE DEBATE WAS RESUMED: FIRST BY MR. KISSINGER'S SPEECH IN APRIL 1973; THEN BY EVENTS IN THE NEAR EAST. SO MUCH SO, THAT THE MINISTERS, IN THEIR COMMUNIQUE AT THE END OF THE LAST MINISTERIAL SESSION, INVITED THE COUNCIL TO EXAMINE THE MOST APPROPRIATE METHODS OF ENSURING TO THIS CONSULTATION ALL ITS EFFECTIVENESS.

IN OUR OPINION, ONE SHOULD FIRST OF ALL DISTINGUISH CLEARLY BETWEEN CONSULTATION AND INFORMATION, WHICH IS NOT ALWAYS EASY.

I. TO CONSULT MEANS TO INFORM FIRST AND OBTAIN THE OPINION OF OTHERS BEFORE TAKING ACTION. IT IS A STRICT REQUIREMENT FOR IF IT DOES NOT INVOLVE OBLIGATORY CONFORMATION TO THE OPINIONS THUS OBTAINED (ARTICLE 7, HARMEL REPORT), IT AIMS AT TAKING THEM INTO ACCOUNT AND COULD IMPOSE DELAY IN TAKING ACTION.

THIS IS CERTAINLY WHY THE TREATY RESERVES THIS (REQUIREMENT) FOR MATTERS CONCERNING THE SECURITY OF ITS MEMBERS - THIS IS ARTICLE IV -- AND WHY IT MUST, VERY CLEARLY, PLAY A PART WHEN MATTERS RELATING TO EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICAN ARE INVOLVED (ARTICLES VI AND VI)

HERE, THE SPIRIT FITS IN THE WITH LETTER. OUR ALLIANCE'S PURPOSE IS CONFIDENTIAL

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OUR COMMON SECURITY IN A FIXED AREA (CERTAINE ZONE). IT IS NATURAL THAT CONSULTATION SHOULD APPLY TO THOSE PROBLEMS WHICH, BY THEIR NATURE OR GEOGRAPHIC TIES WHERE THEY ARISE, MAKE IT DESIRABLE TO OBTAIN THE COMPREHENSION OF EVERYONE AND IF POSSIBLE -BUT THIS IS NOT AN OBLIGATION - AGREEMENT ON THE LINE OF CONDUCT TO BE FOLLOWED.

I ALSO BELIEVE, AND IT IS GOOD THAT IT SHOULD BE SO, THAT IN PRACTICE WE HAVE GIVEN A FAIRLY BROAD INTERPRETATION TO THE OBLIGATION LAID DOWN IN ARTICLE 4. IT IS THUS THAT CONSULTATION WAS VERY LARGELY PRACTICED DURING THE NUMEROUS MINISTERIAL DISCUSSIONS ON DETENTE AND THIS MOREOVER BY VIRTUE OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE PROVIDED IN THE HARMEL REPORT.

CONSULTATION ALSO HAD BEARING ON THE PREPARATION OF THE CSCE, THE PRELIMINARY IN BERLIN - NOT TO SPEAK OF WHAT TOOK PLACE IN THE LAST FEW YEARS BUT EMPHASIZING THE FACT THAT, IN THESE TWO CASES, OUR GOVERNMENTS WERE NOT ONLY ABLE TO CONSULT WITH EACH OTHER BUT TO ADOPT COMMON POSITIONS.

PERHAPS, BY GOING BACK TO EVENTS OF LAST FALL, I COULD MAKE OUR THINKING MORE PRECISE; AT THE TIME OF THE CRISIS IN THE NEAR EAST, CONSULTATION PLAYED NO PART AND WE DO NOT HOLD IT AGAINST THE UNITED STATES FOR IT WAS A PROBLEM OUTSIDE OF THE TREATY AREA. ON THE OTHER HAND, OUR OPINION IS THAT THE PLACING OF FORCES IN WESTERN EUROPE IN AN ALERT STATUS WOULD HAVE JUSTIFIED CONSULTATION.

II. WHEN ARTICLES 4 THROUGH 6 DO NOT APPLY, I.E., IN GENERAL FOR PROBLEMS ARISING OUTSIDE THE TREATY AREA, IT CAN ONLY BE A MATTER OF INFORMING AND IT IS UP TO THE RESPONSIBLE COUNTRY TO EVALUATE WHAT IT CAN AND MUST SAY TO ITS ALLIES ON A PARTICULAR MATTER OF IMPORTANCE.

PROVIDING INFORMATION TO THE COUNCIL IS AN OLD CUSTOM WE HAVE PRACTICED AND TO CONTINUE TO PRACTICE. IT IS THE SUBJECT OF DECLARATIONS TO THE COUNCIL, USUALLY UNDER THE FIRST ITEM ON THE AGENDA. IT CAN HAPPEN THAT THIS INFORMATION GIVES RISE TO STUDY AND DISCUSSION. THIS IS PARTICULARLY THE CASE WHEN WE APPRECIATE AT THEIR TRUE VALUE THE PERIODIC REPORTS THE UNITED STATES PROVIDES US ON THE SALT NEGOTIATIONS, NEGOTIATIONS WHICH ARE ESSENTIALLY BILATERAL AND IN WHICH
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THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT, IN PRINCIPLE, TO REQUEST OR RECEIVE ANY AUTHORITY OR APPROVAL FROM ITS ALLIES, BUT WHOSE SCOPE IS SUCH FOR EVERYONE THAT WASHINGTON CONSIDERS IT USEFUL AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE ALLIANCE TO KEEP US INFORMED. HERE ALSO, THE SEPARATION BETWEEN CONSULTATION AND INFORMATION IS NOT QUITE DECIDED. DOUBTLESS THAT IS WHY THE AMERICAN DELEGATION TOLD US - AND WE NOTED THIS WITH SATISFACTION - THAT NO DECISION WOULD BE TAKEN CONCERNING SYSTEMS ON FORWARD BASES WITHOUT THE ALIES HAVING BEEN ABLE TO DISCUSS THE MATTER.

BUT THIS WOULD BE, WE BELIEVE, GIVING WAY TO ILLUSION, IF WE WERE TO HOPE TO CHANGE THE CUSTOM OF PROVIDING INFORMATION INTO AN OBLIGATION, NOT FORESEEN BY THE TREATY, OF CONSULTATION PRIOR TO TAKING ACTION, JUST AS GIVING CONSULTATION A MORE OBLIGATORY CHARACTER OVER A BROADER AREA (DOMAINE) WOULD BE. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE DIFFERENT POSITIONS OF ONE COUNTRY OR ANOTHER OWING TO GEOPOLITICS OR POWER POLITICS - (POLITIQUE DE LA GEOGRAPHIE OU DE LA PUISSANCE), SUCH AN ILLUSION WOULD CERTAINLY OCCASION DISAPPOINTMENT.

SUCH ARE MY GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS ON THIS PROBLEM. THEY ARE NOT
REVOLUTIONARY AND MAY EVEN SEEM TOO CONSERVATIVE. THEY MAY ALSO SEEM
TO
PRESENT, UNDER A VERY CLEAR-CUT CLASSIFICATION, MATTERS IN WHICH
IT IS NOT ALWAYS EASY TO SEPARATE THE TWO METHODS OF COMMUNI-
CATION IN PRACTICE. BUT THEY HAVE IN THEIR FAVOR, THE FORCE WHICH
THE TREATY'S GUARANTEE (CAUTION) GIVES AND, WE BELIVE, A REALISTIC
EVALUATION OF THE ELEMENTS OF THE PROBLEM.

END TEXT. RUMFELD

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 11 JUN 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ATO00852
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: NATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740267/abbrythh.tel
Line Count: 174
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: n/a
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: USNATO 0803
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 APR 2002 by kellew0>; APPROVED <27-Aug-2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TEXT OF FRENCH NAC STATEMENT ON ALLIANCE CONSULTATION
TAGS: PFOR, NATO
To: STATE INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS
SALT TWO GENEVA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005